



## VILLAGE OF ISLAND LAKE State of the Village 2025

### Fellow Residents,

**Happy New Year!** Let us take a moment to welcome 2025 and reflect on the progress we have made together. Over the past four years, we have worked diligently to put Island Lake back on track, addressing key challenges facing our community and issues and concerns raised by our residents. We are proud to share that our Village is thriving, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to all residents, businesses and volunteers who help make Island Lake a "Community of Friendly People."

### Finances and Human Resources

- **Financial Stability:** Village finances are strong, bills are paid promptly, and overtime expenses are at their lowest in years. Employee paychecks are accurate, and we have eliminated the \$30,000 annual cost of outsourcing bank reconciliation.
- **Human Resources:** The department is now functional, with an annual employee review system in place for disciplinary and performance assessments.
- **Recreation Department:** We halted a \$50,000 yearly loss in this area.
- **Police Pension Fund:** For the first time, the Village is contributing \$400,000 annually to the fund.
- **Transparency:** The Village budget is a public record available to all residents.

**Village Vehicle Stickers were eliminated in 2024!** As we work to grow revenues by growing businesses, seeking grants and pursuing additional resources, we try to ease financial burdens for our residents where we can.

### Business Growth and Development

We welcomed numerous businesses, including Dollar General, Splendid Nails, Annie's, Emerald Dispensary & Lounge, British Maids, Smooth Paving, Island Dental, Shuffle Shack and Beyond (a place to play board games and more), Leathers 4U, Eagle Excavating, MuttCuts Pet Spa, La Pequeña Mariposa (restaurant and ice cream shop), Station1 Eleven (a collectibles store) and many others. Looking ahead to 2025, new businesses like Kelley's Mobil Market, Bolton Concrete, and a grocery store are on the horizon.

The former Save More property has a new owner and is ready for new business development. The former gas station/tire repair building was demolished, the old gas tanks were safely and properly removed and the new property owner looks forward to bringing in new attractive business.

### Housing Developments

- **2024 Highlights:** Thirty-five new single-family homes were built in Walnut Glen. The new 52-unit Beech Street Senior Lofts 55+ apartments are now complete and nearly at full occupancy.
- **2025 Plans:** Additional single-family homes, playgrounds, and revenue-generating businesses are under discussion for 50 donated acres adjacent to Walnut Glen.
- **Additional Housing:** Potential for apartments, condos and mixed use development.

## Infrastructure Improvements

- **Road Repairs:** Streets in Newbury Village and major roads like Burnett and Eastway were paved and curbed. We plan to repair 1.5 miles of roads annually using \$350,000 in Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) funds.
- **Water System:** Replaced 800+ residential water meters (2,400 still need to be replaced), upgraded software, painted and completed essential maintenance on the water tower and plant.
- **Bridge Replacement:** Island Dr. Bridge replacement is slated for 2027.
- **Village Hall:** Major remodel completed, optimizing unused space.
- **Parking lots replaced:** Dunkin' Donuts, 7-Eleven mall, Citgo Gas Station
- **Save More Gas Station** Demolished
- **Future Projects:** Working with CLCJAWA to bring Lake Michigan water to Island Lake by 2028-29, a crosswalk at Route 176 and Westridge Drive, cleanup along Route 176, and pursuing funding for final replacement of old water mains serving Janet Drive.

## Park Improvements and Lake Management

- **Investments:** Passed an ordinance allocating 10% of gaming revenue (\$15,000-\$20,000 annually) for park and lake maintenance. Designated Electrical Aggregation monthly donations for parks—a total of \$13,750 in 2024.
- **Grants:** Secured \$205,000 for the new Converse Park equipment and site preparation and a grant to repair the Channel Park shoreline and install native buffers for shoreline stabilization and erosion control.
- **Improvements:** Added new playground equipment at Maple Ridge Park in Fox River Shores, updated basketball courts, expanded parking, and opened an 18-hole disc golf course at Puri Family Park/Veterans Memorial Park, added a new Kayak Launch in collaboration with the Island Lake Lions Club. A project to add a pavilion at Eastway Park is in progress—also in collaboration with the Lions.
- Added additional parking at some parks.
- Thank you LYAA and the Wreckers for assisting with the maintenance of baseball fields. They look great!
- **Future Plans:** Pursuing funding to dredge the lake for sustainable maintenance, new park equipment at Vista Park located in Porten subdivision in the Fox River Shores.

## Police Department

- **Upgrades:** Added body-worn cameras, new vehicles, and implemented modern dispatch and records systems.
- **Grants:** Secured over \$60,000 in funding for officer wellness, equipment, and safety programs.
- **Community Engagement:** Launched the Adopt-a-Cop program at Cotton Creek School as well as other events and programs like National Night Out and Cop on a Rooftop (an annual fundraiser for Special Olympics).
- Keeping our Village safe and secure.

## Public Works

- **Efficiency:** Introduced a well overdue Work Order System and controlled overtime.
- **Training:** All employees are now OSHA 30 certified and continuing with ongoing training.
- **Upgrades:** Purchased new vehicles, a water meter system, and a WaterGator to enhance lake-cleanup efforts.

- **Parks Maintenance and Improvement:** keeping our parks safe and clean including Channel Park/Mutton Creek restoration. Look around the Village; it is looking good!
- **Water Infrastructure:** Rebuilt primary water source Well #9 and Installed SCADA automation system on water facilities.

### **Village Events**

2024 was filled with cherished traditions and new festivities:

- **Lakefest:** Bigger and better with three days of rides, live music, and fun.
- **Oktoberfest:** Hosted the 5th annual Oktoberfest and 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Dachshund Derby.
- **Cardboard Sled Race:** Island Lake's 2<sup>nd</sup> annual at Converse Park Hill.
- **Senior Center Dinners;** 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Thanksgiving and Christmas Dinners at our Senior Center.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Island Lake Carp Fest** with a new Kids Fishing Derby.
- **New events** are under consideration.

**2025 is Island Lake's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!** The Village will celebrate this event with a parade, picnic and live music.

**As we enter 2025, we remain committed to fostering a vibrant and welcoming community.** Your input and support are invaluable as we continue to improve Island Lake.

Warm regards,

### **Mayor Richard W. McLaughlin**

Trustee Brittney Alers  
 Trustee Chuck Cermak  
 Trustee Steve Deasey  
 Trustee Thadd Lewis  
 Trustee Stacey Pyne  
 Trustee Will Ziegler